

CHRISTIE'S

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CHRISTIE'S TO AUCTION PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL OBJECTS FROM THE CREATION OF WIKIPEDIA

ONLINE AUCTION: DECEMBER 3-15



A Strawberry iMac
APPLE COMPUTER INC., 2000

Jimmy Wales's personal iMac used in the creation of *Wikipedia*.

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Hello, World!

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JIMMY WALES (B. 1966)
"Hello World!"

The first edit to the Wikipedia HomePage, 15 January 2001.

NEW YORK – Christie's is honored to auction two objects pertaining to the history of Wikipedia directly from Jimmy Wales, the co-founder of the online non-profit encyclopedia. The online sale titled [The Birth of Wikipedia](#) takes place from December 3-15, and consists of two lots: a Strawberry iMac used by Wales at the time and an NFT of Wikipedia's first edit.

A portion of the sale proceeds will help support Wales's alternative social media network pilot project WT.Social, an attempt to find a healthier and nontoxic alternative with existing social media platforms with a donation-only advertising-free model, as well as to help support a variety of charities working in the free culture world.

The Strawberry iMac was Wales' personal computer, which he used for development and research at the time of the website's launch on January 15, 2001, monitoring the site's early development, guarding against vandals, and marveling at its rapid growth. As the computer grew obsolete, it was relegated to the room of his young daughter, who used it to play video games. It was later stored away in its original box, which will be included with the sale.

Christie's will also offer an NFT of the first edit to Wikipedia: "*Hello, World!*" Made by Wales on the day Wikipedia launched, which would be the first in a long line of edits that would produce the "the largest and most-read reference work in history." (*Wikipedia*) and the NFT preserves the layout of the Wikipedia home page in 2001, based on the earliest source code extant. The NFT also has a dynamic feature, enabling the owner to edit the page, which can be reset with a timer to revert to its original state.

"It's been over twenty years since I first typed in the words "Hello, World!" to launch Wikipedia— and even today, I'm still amazed at the size and breadth of what it has become," remarked Jimmy Wales. "I'm so pleased that we have this opportunity to celebrate the work of Wikipedia's dedicated volunteers, and I hope that the funds raised can both contribute to furthering that effort and to help support my latest project, WT.Social, a decentralized, non-commercial social network free of advertising, tracking, information harvesting, and misinformation."

Peter Klarnet, Senior Specialist, Christie's said: "More than any other site on the internet, Wikipedia realizes its ultimate promise: to be a collaborative and open space where information could be made easily accessible to others. This freely accessible compendium of human knowledge, built upon the effort of millions over the past 20 years, is one of the finest examples of what decentralized groups working toward a common goal can achieve on this transformative medium. As a regular user of Wikipedia in my own work, I am honored to handle this important sale."

Bonnie Brennan, President of Christie's America, stated: "Christie's is honored to present The Birth of Wikipedia, as it gives us a chance to celebrate, on a global stage, the initial creation of what has become the largest reference source ever assembled. In a year of firsts at Christie's, particularly in the area of NFTs, we are delighted to offer this unique NFT."

A public online panel to celebrate the auction will be held on Thursday, December 9, 2021 from noon to 1pm ET via Zoom. Hosted by Klarnet, the panel will feature Jimmy Wales, Co-Founder, Wikipedia; and Lawrence Lessig, Co-Founder, Creative Commons. They will discuss the impact of Wikipedia on the internet and the future of the open source movement. Please [RSVP](#) for the event.

[Watch a video](#) with Jimmy Wales.
Images available for press use [here](#).

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